

PARENTS' PAGE LESSON 29: Paul's Mission

Timeless Truth: *Without Jesus, all fall short of God's glory.*

Bible Basis: Acts 16:16-36; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-5, 3:9-13, 4:16-18, 5:16-28; 1 Corinthians 1:10, 12:12-18, 27, 13:1-7, 15:21-22, 16:23-24; Galatians 5:22-25, 6:18

Key Verse: "He asked, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus' " (Acts 16:30-31)

Resource: *The Story: Teen Edition, The Story for Kids/Children/Little Ones:* Chapter 29

Parent Tips:

Use the Table Talk questions to start a discussion around the dinner table during the week. The Living Faith activity encourages your family to make a thankfulness chain. The Extra Mile takes your family to an inspirational video that talks about Paul's life.

Get the Point:

Preschool: Jesus saves us if we believe in him. I can choose to believe.

Elementary: Jesus saves us if we believe in him. I can choose to believe.

Middle/High School: Following Jesus and spreading his message is not always easy, but builds our character.

Table Talk

Preschool/Elementary

- Paul and Silas traveled around preaching about God. Some people loved them; others wanted to hurt them. One time they were arrested and chained up in jail. Instead of feeling sorry for themselves, they sang and prayed to God. Why were they doing this?
- How would you act if you were thrown in jail? Would you sing? Would you be scared?
- Why weren't Paul and Silas scared?
- A powerful earthquake opened all the jail doors and made the chains fall off. Why didn't Paul and Silas escape?
- The jailer nearly killed himself when he saw the prison doors open, because his punishment would've been death if the prisoners escaped. But Paul shouted, "We're all here." The jailer immediately wanted to know how to be saved and how he could serve Paul's God. Talk about how witnessing with actions can sometimes be more effective than telling people about God with words.

Middle/High School

- Paul suffered a lot for Jesus Christ. He was blinded, beaten, stoned, jailed. But he said suffering was good because it creates perseverance, character and hope. Have you ever suffered for something and then come out better in the end? Tell that story.
- Paul warns Christians to stay away from sinful acts, such as sexual immorality, impurity, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, jealousy, fits or rage, drunkenness, etc. Do any things in this list stand out as extremely bad or not so bad sins? In God's eyes is all sin the same?

- Looking at the above list, talk about specific ways you can overcome certain sinful behaviors. With all the pornography on the Internet and sexualized commercials on TV, is it harder today to stay pure and sexually moral?
- Paul writes some great things about love. It's patient and kind. It's not envious, boastful or self-seeking. How does this kind of biblical love differ from the love that boyfriends and girlfriends say to each other?
- What's your favorite part of Paul's definition of love? (Look up 1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

Living Faith

Paul endured many trials for his faith. Through everything he remained hopeful and thankful. For this family activity, you'll need pieces of colored construction paper, scissors, markers or pens and glue. Gather your family and explain that Paul spent a lot of times in chains, but it didn't let anything dampen his faith. Paul said, "How can we thank God enough," (1 Thessalonians 3:9).

Create a thankfulness chain as a family by cutting construction paper into 8-inch strips that are about one-and-a-half inches wide. (Regular white paper would work, too.) Have each family member take five to ten strips of paper. Write down something you're thankful for on each strip. Then glue the ends of the strip together to create a chain link. Make sure the words are on the inside of the link. Interlock the links as other family members write what they're thankful for and watch your chain grow. Try not to say what you're writing down on your chain. When everybody's finished and a long chain is created, hang it over a doorway. Leave it hanging for a few days and then plan a time to get together as a family again. Tear off a link of the chain and read what's on the inside. Have the person who wrote that message explain why their thankful. Keep going until you've totally dismantled the chain. Thank God for breaking the chains in your life and giving you so much to be thankful for!

Extra Mile

God doesn't want us to live half-heartedly for him. He wants our total commitment. He wants us to be passionate about the things he's passionate about. He wants us to have the faith to persevere like Paul.

Go to YouTube and watch Ray Vander Laan's message, "Run! The Passion of Elijah." If you prefer to show a portion of this 21:41 video, show the segment from 11:00 to 14:30.

After you've watched this video, talk about Ray's message.

- Why don't we live passionate lives for Jesus?
- Why is it easy to fall into part-time discipleship?
- How can we live as Christian Olympians?

Remember: Don't hold back in your Christian life. How we live shows others that God is king!